1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
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stant dancing and singing, were rather dull and monotonous, considered as ceremonial. The gaily colored posts erected right on the grave served as a sort of central altar. Every senior male sang and danced in turn " his own dance" and the rest of the men standing in a large circle acted as a major chorus. A large gap was left in the circle of men and into this gap and out again danced the women in a disorderly clump, as a sort of minor chorus. Most of the day was taken up with endless repetitions of these individually owned and individually performed dances which had no relation whatever to death or the deceased, but which each "owner" used on every ceremonial occasion. In addition, there were a few ritual performances that were special to the fact of death, including the grand finale of every mourning ceremony, when everybody present, led by the mourners, collectively charged the posts and then roared past them into the surrounding bush. This was done to drive the spirits away from the grave finally and forever and thus end the mourners' state of *pukimani*.

We have no space for further details of ceremonial, but enough has been said to indicate that mourning ceremonies, the biggest collective occasions of the Tiwi dry season, were as much political affairs as they were religious occasions. The connecting link was the state of *pukimani* in which death put the relatives. Men in a state of *pukimani* were at a disadvantage in social and political life while that state lasted. They had to ask other people to do things for them. They had to "pay" for these favors. At the same time they could not afford to be niggardly in running their relative's funeral. If they were, they would never live it down. In such an atmosphere we have to conclude that the spiritual welfare of the deceased was relegated to a minor place and that for the mourners the real climax of the days of frenzied grief around the posts came when the spirits were driven away from the grave into the bush and thus their own *pukimani* state, which had been such a political handicap to them for many months, came to an end.

INITIATION Space permits only the barest mention of initiation, which was, along with mourning, the chief vehicle of Tiwi ritual. For females there were no initiation ceremonies, but for males it was a long drawn-out and elaborate affair, marked by successive stages or grades which began with the status of *Marukumarni*, which a boy entered when he was about fourteen, and did not end finally until he was around twenty-four. Here again we meet the ideology of debt and obligation. The group of men, necessarily older than himself, who initiated a youth thereby put him under obligation to them for the rest of his life. They "did something for him" and years later would bring it up if his subsequent behavior seemed to be directed against their interests. The obligations contracted in initiation, like obligations contracted at burials or mourning ceremonies, were woven into the kinship and influence systems; indeed the relation of a youth to the men who initiated him was often the beginning of a satellite-patron relationship that lasted half his life.

The initiation of a boy had to be undertaken by a group of men who were already fully initiated themselves and who stood to him in the relation of male cross-cousins. Preferably such men were either married to or likely

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to marry the boy's sisters, an easily met requirement since girls were "married" so much earlier than their brothers. Very senior and successful men did not bother as a rule with initiation sponsorship because it took too much of their valuable time. Hence in practice, most boys at the *Marukumarni* age were taken in hand by a group of men around 40 years of age who were at least betrothed to, if not already married to, the boys' sisters. Such men justified or rationalized their actions by stating that, as the husbands of the boy's sisters, they wanted their little brother-in-law to be made into a man in proper form. In fact, they were usually given the job by the boy's father, who, having bestowed daughters upon them, regarded it as a legitimate request to make of them. It was the duty of male cross-cousins to initiate their wives' little brothers, but in true Tiwi style the father had to request them to do it, and they counted it in their tallies of what they owed him and what he owed them.

Though the father instigated and stage managed the whole affair, he and his household were always thunderstruck when the cross-cousins—armed to the teeth and painted like a war party—arrived at his camp one evening and proceeded to carry off forcibly the yelling 14-year-old.[6] He had to be dragged literally from the bosom of his family, with his mother screaming and trying to hide him and the father pretending to resist the invaders of his household. From then on, until the final stage (*Mikingula*) at age 24-26, the boy was completely under the authority of the men who carried him off. During these approximately ten to twelve years, he spent much of the time alone with them in the bush where the group lived a monastic existence, as a small band of isolates, speaking to no one (especially not to females) and obtaining their own food. During these phases the tutors guarded the boy as if he were literally a prisoner and taught him all the things—chiefly ritual matters—that grown men should know. At intervals the youth was allowed to go home, on week-end leaves so to speak, but when at home he had to observe all the silences, the modest demeanor, the taboos and the austerities of the isolated life. In monastic language, he was under a strict rule of obedience to his tutors.

Breaking in on the long years of austerity, spent either in seclusion in the bush or in *pukimani* at home, were periodic collective ceremonies when the youth was ritually advanced from one stage of initiation to the next.[7] These were public ceremonies, witnessed by large crowds, and the more important of such transition ceremonies took place in January and February when the *kolema* yams were ripe. At these ceremonies the youths were handled in batches or classes, all the boys of one grade being ritually advanced to the next grade, and the top grade or final class being formally graduated as fully initiated men. The crucial grade—when the pubic hairs were forcibly pulled out and he was at last allowed to talk back a little to his tutors—was usually reached by a youth somewhere between his eighteenth and twentieth years, but

[6] See Hart 1955 for some further details of the tearing away of the boy from the bosom of his family.

[7] A full list of initiation grade names and their duration in years is given in Hart 1931.

177 S92 them impressive collections of females. But these collections included now only one wife.

Let us consider again the case of Cabbagee. It will be remembered that 159 177 592 his had been one of Father Gsell's first marriages and, except for a few uncomfortable months, he had been monogamous all his life. There were camped with him in 1954 a number of women and children who were related to him in many ways. There was his wife Polly, now a good Catholic who had taken the Christian name of Carmel, and her ancient mother Rita, who had borne a child long before the white man came to Bathurst Island. Also in "Cabbagee's camp," as the natives referred to it, was Patrick, Cabbagee's only son, and Patrick's wife. Patrick and his wife had three surviving children between the ages of four and thirteen; they also were raising 14-year-old Fabian, whose [736 968] deceased father had been a "brother" of Patrick and whose deceased mother had been a "sister" of Patrick's wife. Cabbagee and Carmel (alias Polly) had three daughters, and Cabaggee had arranged with each son-in-law that he reside with Cabbagee and support him in his fights and politics. These daughters and sons-in-law had a total of ten children. The other members of Cabbagee's camp included the widow and children of Carmel's deceased [584 589] younger maternal half-brother. Cabbagee had given this "sister" to Carmel's half-brother for his wife and when he died seven years later leaving a number of young children, Cabbagee defended the right of his "sister" not to remarry. With this "sister" of Cabbagee lived her step-mother and occasionally her real mother, until the latter died. Further, living in Cabbagee's camp were [607] two of his full sister's daughters and their husbands, who became members of the camp by reason of the fact that Cabbagee arranged his sister's marriage in such a way that her husband, Babui, accepted Cabbagee as his leader.[1] [602] When Babui arranged his own daughters' marriages, his new sons-in-law became subservient to Babui and thereby subservient to Cabbagee. Also resident in Cabbagee's camp at times were his younger paternal half-brother Pawpaw with his two surviving wives, his full brother Tommy's son, and two of their widowed "sisters" and their children.

177 162 571 We have mentioned here only that segment of Cabbagee's camp led by Cabbagee himself and that led by his half-brother Pawpaw, but such a listing is adequate for our purposes. It is noteworthy that the downward alteration in the age of marriage for males has meant that many less women become widows; first marriages of women last longer and, therefore, the system of patronage established at the time of the first marriage is more permanent. [764] Babui's marriage, for example, had made him a henchman of Cabbagee from about 1920 to 1955. When women did become widows, especially if they had 604 587 177 daughters, they were protected by their brothers who thereby became the "boss" of their daughters. The father or the "boss" of a girl arranged her mar-

[1] Hart would use the word "patron" in this relationship. Pilling prefers the word "leader." This is itself an indication of a certain subtle change in Tiwi social structure. The patron-satellite relationship of 1928-29 is nowadays better expressed as leader-follower. The pairs of men are closer in age than they used to be. How the Tiwi themselves now express the relationship is indicated in the next footnote.